and above as compared to those with lower levels of education—be it rural or urban area.

* About 1 per cent of usual status (ps) workers reported change in their industry of work during the two years preceding the date of survey.

* About 1 per cent of male workers and less than 1 per cent of female workers reported change in their occupation during the two years preceding the date of survey.

Working conditions in IT sector

2363. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the study made by the National Labour Institute, on working conditions in IT sector; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, an autonomous society under the Ministry of Labour and Employment is mandated to carry out research and training on labour related issues. Its faculty enjoys considerable academic freedom in selecting the theme and the subject matter of research projects. As per this practice a micro-level study relating to labour in Business Process Outsourcing was conducted by one of the Associate Fellows of the Institute. The study was conducted during 2003. The report of the study was based on the findings of the field survey conducted among 277 customer care agents from six call centres in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. That way the study was based entirely on the responses of call centre agents in a limited geographical cluster.

The study evaluates the perceptions of work experience of the call centre agents to throw light on the potentialities and possible problem areas of human relations in order to strengthen the sustainability of the industry in the longer term. It does not represent the view of all the actors in the industry and does not purport to represent the entire BPO sector in

the country. Moreover, the views expressed in the report are of the concerned researcher and not of the institute or of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

BPOs are covered under the existing labour laws. The State Governments are the "appropriate Government" under the various labour laws and legally vested with powers to deal with violation of labour laws in BPO Sector.

Amendment of Plantation Labour Act

2364. SHRI SILVIUS CONDPAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received proposal for amendment of Plantation Labour Act from Assam Government;

(b) if so, why there is delay in bringing the amendment in the Parliament to the above Act in the interest of workers;

(c) whether there is any proposal for bringing amendment in the Bonus Act, considering more incentives to the workers; and

(d) whether there is any proposal for enhancing the rate of interest on Employees Provident Fund deposit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The Central Government consulted the State Government on the proposal for amendment of Plantation Labour Act, 1951. The comments of the Assam Government have been received along with the comments of the concerned State Governments. The proposal is under further examination.

(c) Taking into consideration of the recommendations made by the Second National Commission on Labour, a proposal to enhance the eligibility limit for Payment of Bonus from salary or wage of Rs. 3,500/- p.m. to Rs. 7,500/- p.m. and the calculation ceiling from Rs. 2,500/- p.m. to Rs. 3,500/- p.m. under the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 is under active consideration of the Ministry.

(d) The rate of interest on EPF deposits is determined by the Central Government in consultation with the Central Board of Trustees, Employees